

A
S E R M O N

PREACH'D

In the PARISH-CHURCH

OF

HORLEY in SURREY,

On JUNE the 7th, 1716.

Being the *Thanksgiving-Day*, for the
Suppressing of the Late Unnatural
REBELLION.

By SAMUEL BILLINGSLEY, M. A.
Vicar of Horley, and Rector of
Newdigate.

L O N D O N :

Printed for D. MIDWINTER, at the
Three Crowns in *St. Paul's-Church-Yard*,
MDCCXVI.

STEAMON

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MDCCLXVI.

TO
My very Good FRIENDS,
WILL. JORDAN, Esq;
AND
LEMYNG REBOW, Esq;

THIS
SERMON
IS
DEDICATED,

BY

Their Humble Servant,

SAM. BILLINGSLY.

TO
MY VERY GOOD FRIENDS
WILL. JORDAN, Esq.
AND
LEWIS REBOW, Esq.
THIS
SERMON
IS
DEDICATED
BY
THOMAS HUMBLE, Servant
SAM. BILLINGSLEY.

PSALM XVIII. 49, 50.

Therefore will I give Thanks unto thee, O Lord, among the Heathen, and sing Praises unto thy Name. Great Deliverance giveth he to his King; and sheweth Mercy to his Anointed, to David, and to his Seed for evermore.



HIS Psalm of Thanksgiving, this Song of Triumph, was probably composed by David, some time after he was in Possession of the Kingdom, when he had conquer'd all his Enemies, escaped the Persecutions and Plots of Saul against him; baffled and slain the Pretender Ishbosheth, his Son; disappointed the Counsel of Achitophel, by Hu-
shai

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Ishai the *Archite*, *David's* Friend; suppressed the unnatural Rebellion of *Absalom*, and the Crown was fixed upon his Head, and the Kingdom in a profound Peace. This probably, was the Time it was composed; and as probable is it, that it was sung or spoken by *David*, and his Musicians, on a Solemn Feast Day, appointed for a Thanksgiving to God, for the Victory he had given him, and *Israel*, over all their Enemies; as we may learn from the Title of this Psalm, it being directed to the Chief Musician, and called, *A Psalm of David, the Servant of the Lord, who spake unto the Lord the Words of this Song, in the Day that the Lord delivered him from the Hand of all his Enemies, and from the Hand of Saul.* But though *Saul* only is here mention'd by Name, as being the Head, and Chief Cause of the Faction in *Israel*, against *David's* being King, who would not, if possible, that he shou'd Reign over them, though they knew he was designed thereto by God, and consequently could not be defeated; yet is it plain from the History in 2 *Sam.* 22. where it is set down after the Suppression of the Civil War raised by *Absalom*, that this Thanksgiving was not celebrated till all was over, the Contentions

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tions at an End, and the Hearts of *Israel* and *Judah* reunited in King *David*. Nay, from several Expressions made use of in the Song, as Verse 29. where he says, *thou hast subdued under me those that rose up against me*: And Verse 43. *Thou hast delivered me from the Strivings of the People*; and in many other Places, 'tis evident, the *Psalmist* had an Eye chiefly to this Civil War, from which God had just delivered him. And therefore on such an Occasion as this, when we are met together to praise our God, for the gracious Deliverance of us, and our King, from all our Enemies; from Persecutions, as numerous and violent as any *Saul* devised and designed against *David*; from a Pretender as strongly supported by a Faction among us, as was *Ishbosheth* against him; from the destructive Schemes and Plots of Counsellors, as Cunning and as Wicked as *Achitophel*, and esteemed as much an Oracle by many of the People, as he was in those Days, 2 *Sam.* 16. 23. and from a Rebellion as dangerous as was that of *Ab-salom* against his Father; the Enemy, by various Artifices, by fair Speeches, and specious Pretences, stealing the Hearts of many of the People from our King; as it is observed, 2 *Sam.* 15. 6. *Ab-salom had stollen the*
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the Hearts of the Men of Israel from David. Therefore, I say, where could we better chuse a Subject for our Meditation, than out of such a Song of Thanksgiving, made on Purpose to praise God for Deliverances, which run parallel, and agree in most Points, if not all, with these for which we are here assembled to Praise the Almighty? For has not our Gracious Sovereign equal Reason with David, to say, Verse 43. *The Lord liveth, and blessed be my Rock, and let the God of my Salvation be exalted; that God that avengeth me, who has enabled me to take Revenge upon my Enemies, and subdueth the People under me; hath quelled the Insurrections of my Rebellious Subjects, who refused to submit to my Government; who has delivered me from mine Enemies, lifted me up above those that rose up against me, and delivered me from the violent Men; the Men, that by Violence and Wickedness, would have oppressed me.* The Words then which I have taken for my Text, must be a very suitable Subject for our Purpose, being the Conclusion, or the Sum and Substance of the whole of this most excellent Psalm; into the Phrase and Diction of which, if you look, you will find it extremely

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extremely beautiful; into its Sense and Meaning, throughout wonderful; especially considering, that they contain Two Particulars, than which none can be thought more proper to be spoken to on such an Occasion.

First, If you only invert the Two Verses read to you, and put the Second first, a plain Assertion of a great Deliverance given to King David, a Mercy shewn to him his Anointed, and to his Seed for evermore; as now to our Sovereign.

Secondly, A Conclusion thence drawn, *Therefore will I give Thanks to thee, O Lord, among the Heathen, and sing Praises unto thy Name*; which is the very same we see drawn by our Pious King, on the like Occasion; or else, why are we here assembled, to praise that *Jehovah* or Lord who has given him such mighty Successes; whom by his special Designation he has raised to the Crown of *Great-Britain*, and wonderfully protected from all Dangers and Designs before his coming to the Throne; has given him such great and easy Victories over his Enemies after it; and we hope

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answerably to all these Earnests and Pledges of Divine Favour, will establish the Kingdom in his House for ever.

First, Great Deliverance, says the Psalmist, hath God given to his King. His King, a King that had not invaded or taken the Kingdom upon him by Violence, but of special Designation and Appointment; and whom therefore God does Ordain to be Kings on Earth, them will he glorify; they shall not want Deliverances to bring his Purpose to pass, if they stand in need of never so many and great. Thus much the Word, Holy David here makes use of, intimates; in it self implying Greatness; and being put in the Plural Number, denotes the Frequency and Variety of that which it signifies, every kind of Salvation, and therefore justly rendred great Deliverance, or Deliverances. Nor could the Prophet, if we suppose, as we need not doubt that he had an Eye in the Composition of this Psalm, to the Constancy of the Divine Protection over him, have said less; for then he must remember, how many and how great his Deliverances had been, from his first raising him up, and Designation of him to the Throne, upon the

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the Rejection of *Saul* and his Family, to his making all Opposition fall before him, and his settling him therein.

All great Power, we know, is subject to Envy; nor are any more envied, than such as are unexpectedly exalted to the highest Point of Earthly Ambition, the Possession of a Crown. Accordingly we see numberless Plots, both Private and Publick, set on foot by *Saul* and his Friends, to disappoint King *David's* Succession, and even take away his Life before his Accession. What Shifts was he forced to make use of? How to fly from Place to Place, and dwell in a strange Countrey, to escape the malicious Rage and cruel Intentions of his many and powerful Persecutors? How often betrayed by Friends, and succoured by Enemies? No sooner was he declared and made King in *Hebron* by the House of *Judah*, but contrary to the Divine Appointment, sufficiently made known and manifested before throughout all the People, *Abner* the Captain of *Saul's* Host, sets up *Ish-boseth*, one of his late Master's Sons, against him, and makes him King over all *Israel*, 2 *Sam.* 2. 9. Noise and Tumults, Animosities and Divisions, fill the

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whole

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whole Country, and arm them one against another; and at last numerous Armies are gathered together, and stand in Battel Array on the one and on the other Side of the Pool of Gibeon; and after a Skirmish of a few select Men on each Side, a sore Battel is fought, *Verse 17.* and Abner was beaten, and the Men of *Israel*, before the Servants of *David*.

Here might I fairly lay before you the dreadful Consequences of Contentions, all the bloody Evils and desolating Mischiefs of Civil War; the enraged Fury, with which such irreconcilable Enemies meet, (for nothing can be more inveterate and malicious than Friends turn'd into Enemies, none more obstinate or merciless to one another;) the Fury the *Israelites* and the Men of *Judab* must fight with; to denote which, the very Text, we see, gives an unusual Epithet to this Fight, and calls it a *sore* Battel: Here might I present unto you, the mournful Groans of dying Combatants, Heaps of Slain, Fields and Roads strowed with dead Bodies, the terrible Slaughter of the conquered flying Squadrons and Battalions, and the Fury of the insulting and pursuing Conqueror; the one crying for Mercy,

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the other with Scoffs and Taunts stabbing to the Heart, without the least Distinction of Age or Degree, Quality or Endowments. We that have never seen it, cannot have a true Conception of the horrible Violence of a Victorious Army; the impossibility to restrain them from plundering Cities, desolating Countries, ravaging and overturning all Things. These are common to all Wars; but as to Civil Wars, what follows is generally more abominable; the indispensable Severities the Government must have recourse to, to quell its Enemies, and deter them from any more rising up and attempting its Overthrow; Degradations, Confiscations, Imprisonments, Banishments, Executions; and all the terrible Names and Things, which serve to seize Men with Horror and Dread. I have but just mentioned a few of the numberless Mischiefs attending Civil Wars, and yet sufficient to make us all tremble; especially if you consider, that very lately we were within hearing of these Miseries, and had not the Rebellion been suppress'd by God's Blessing, we shou'd in all probability by this time, have felt and smarted, under some or all these destroying Evils: Evils these, which when fallen upon us, are not so light as to admit of Complaints; but are beyond Utterance as well as Redress; which,

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if not accompanied with the Death of the Sufferers, however wholly amaze and confound, and strike them dumb: They are unspeakable, and therefore I forbear as much as possible, that I may not seem to tear up the Wounds of my Countrey afresh, and renew her Grievs, after they are stilled and laid asleep, and we are here met to praise God for our Deliverance. But yet I cannot but observe, that tho' the Case before us, the War between *David* and *Judah*, with *Ishbosheth* and the Men of *Israel*, is a Transaction long since past and gone; yet change but the Names of Persons and Places, and it is in a great measure our own very Story. Take for Instance, our most Gracious Sovereign King *GEORGE* instead of King *David*. Why not? For has not God the same Power now as he had then, to change the Times and the Seasons, to remove Kings and set up Kings, *Dan*, the 2d, ver. 21, to reject a *Saul*, and raise up a *David*, a Beloved of the Lord? And tho' our Sovereign has not with King *David* a Verbal Nomination directly from on High by the Mouth of an Inspired Prophet; yet has he not had from his first Appointment the universal Consent of the Nations to call him to the Throne? The Voice of the People, which on all hands is allowed sometimes to be looked upon as the Voice of God; especially

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cially when attested from Heaven by signal Providences, such mighty Acts as are only to be referr'd to the stretched out Arm of the Almighty; many of which Approbations and Confirmations of his Title and Possession, our Sovereign has receiv'd in the Eyes of the whole World. Wou'd not this Counsel and Work, if it had been only of Men, and not of God, long since have come to nought? Ought not that to be ascribed to God, which such Numbers and Powers have been defeated in attempting to overthrow? Where are our Senses, if we do not perceive the Finger of God in this, when all the Opposers thereof are so easily and unaccountably baffled; their Counsels and Devices confounded; their Riches squander'd; their Forces vanquished and dispersed; and all their mighty Schemes and Projects end in establishing him whom they strove to pull down; when all Things seem to fight for him, and those who wou'd dethrone him to fight against God? What can convince us of God's Consent and Approbation of him to be our King, if this will not? To see him with *David* here in this *Psalms*, ver. 37. *to pursue his Enemies and overtake them*, and not to turn again till they are consumed; to wound them that they are not able to rise, but are fallen under his Feet; to see him girded with Strength unto Battel,

and

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and those that rose up against him subdued under him; the Necks of his Enemies given him, that he might destroy them that hate him; to see his Adversaries cry, but none come forth to save them; even unto the Lord, and he not to answer them; and then to behold him beating them as small as Dust before the Wind; and casting them out as the Dirt in the Streets? What can convince us of his being the Beloved and chosen of the Lord, if this will not? His being thus delivered from the Strivings of the People, and made the Head of the Heathen; called for by a People he has not known, to be their Arbitrator; to see his Name and Fame to be so great, that Strangers, as soon as they hear of him, obey and submit themselves; and his very Enemies fearfully creeping out of their close Places, pretend to acknowledge and love him: All these marvellous Acts are here justly ascribed by *David* unto God; and as deservedly may all the signal Blessings and Mercies which our glorious King has received, be referr'd to God: Nor can especially so great a Deliverance as the Suppression of the late Rebellion, but shew him to be a peculiar Favourite of Heaven: And therefore, without Opposition, we may here suppose King *GEORGE* for King *David*; and for once, let us allow our present Pretender

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as he would be thought, to be of Royal Race, and change him for *Isboseth*; then let us imagine the Scene of Action to be on the Banks of the River *Tay*, near *Pertb*, instead of the Pool of *Gibeon*; and instead of the Men of *Judah*, and the People of *Israel*, the Armies gathered together under the Captains of our Host, and those of the Enemies of our Religion and Laws; of us and our King, under their several Captains, instead of *Joab* and *Abner*. Thus far, I think, the Parallel holds very good; but if we carry it any farther, there is indeed a Dissimilitude. If we go on to the Event and Issue of these mighty Preparations, there is some Difference. For on the one Side, we read there was a fore Battel; but on the other, not so much as a Skirmish; they even prevented our Generals the Glory of saying, as *Cesar* did on a like Occasion; *We came, and saw, and conquered*; they ran away for Fear, before they came up to them. But so much the more the Lord's Work: God seems to have claimed the whole Glory to himself, by defeating them to our Hands; and putting them to a precipitate Flight by his Heavenly Armies of Dreads and Fears sent into their Hearts. And yet, from these spiritless Enemies, what Hurry, what Confusion, what Frights were we under? How were the Expectations of our false

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Friends,

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Friends, their secret Well-wishers among us, raised? What did they not promise themselves? Like the Mother of Sisera, Judge 5. 2. in Hopes of the Return of her Triumphant Son, they were ready to ask, in full Expectation of the Success of their *Isboseth*, *Why is his Chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the Wheels of his Chariots?* Yea, they return'd Answer to themselves: *Has he not sped? Has he not divided the Prey?* To every Man, if not a Damsel or two, as of old, yet *Bracelets and Chains of Gold*, and Medals to hang at the Ends of them, meet for the Necks of them that take the Spoil? When they saw the Divisions among us; the Backwardness of the *Reubenites*, and *Danites*, and *Assurites*, among our Tribes, to come forth to the Help of the Lord, it made the Thoughts of their Hearts great. How then did they magnify themselves; and as if they had already gain'd the Day, nominate their *Abners*, and *Achishophels*, and *Shimei's*, to be Captains and Treasurers, and Scribes, and Rulers of the People? But so let all thine Enemies perish, O Lord! And let them that love him, be as the Sun when he goeth forth in his Might; still increase in Strength and Glory as the Sun does in Splendor, from his Rising till he ascends unto his Meridian Brightness. Great Deliverance hath God given to his King, his Chosen

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Chosen and Anointed King, our Sovereign; laid such a Foundation for the Establishment of the Kingdom to him and his Posterity, in the utter Overthrow of his Enemies, as that we trust in God they will never be able to rise up again to disturb it, but that it will remain sure and stedfast for evermore.

And therefore, 2dly, As we have great Reason, so let us with *David* in the Text, give Thanks unto the Lord among the Heathen, and sing Praises unto his Name. In Gratitude we can do no less, to that gracious God who has so wonderfully saved us; by the secret Workings of whose Providence, we have never wanted *Hushai's* to defeat the Counsels of their *Achitophels*; to whose Infatuation of their Understandings, we owe their unaccountable Neglect of laying hold on several Opportunities that offered to have destroyed us, when we had thrown away our Weapons, and thought our selves secure, under the Protection of an Inglorious, False, and Destructive Peace, and thereby became naked and defenceless, and exposed to the Malice of those who hate us: But God, who neither slumbereth nor sleepeth, watched over us, and quickly raised us up a *Joab* and *Abishai*, and *Ittai*, to defeat and vanquish their *Abner* and *Amasa*; and therefore let us sing, as

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did Deborah of old, *Jud. 5.* on a like joyful Day, Praise ye the Lord, for the avenging of the People, when they willingly offered themselves: Hear, O ye Kings! Give ear, O ye Princes; We, even we will sing unto the Lord; we will sing Praise to our Lord God. Lord, when thou wentest out with our Armies, when thou marchedst out into the Field before us, the Earth, the great Sons of the Earth, trembled; those who lifted up their Heads as high as the Heavens, dropped; the Mountains melted from before the Lord; the Chieftains that stand among the People like Mountains on the level Earth, excelling in Strength, and Heighth and Glory, were afraid and fled. Our high-ways were unoccupied, and our Travellers walked through By-Paths; the Inhabitants of our Villages ceased; they fled hither and thither, and Fear and Dread were spread throughout our Coasts: But now we are delivered, and need not be afraid with any Amazement. Bless ye the Lord! Awake, awake, and utter a Song: Arise our Barak, and lead thy Captivity captive! And let us all join, and tell out these Works of the Lord with Gladness; publickly and solemnly praise the Lord, as the Original Word denotes, the Author of all our Victories and Successes, and that in a full Congregation; for so may

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may we interpret that which is here rendered, *among the Heathen, or Nations*, for a great Congregation, consisting of People flocking together from all Parts, on such a solemn Occasion. Let us all, therefore, sing Praises, and celebrate his Name, and at the same time not forget, after the Example of *Deborah*, to the select *Ten Thousand* Men of the Children of *Nephtali* and *Zebulon*, to declare the Honour due unto those Instruments of the Lord, those brave Spirits, that undaunted People, that jeopard'd their Lives unto Death, in the High-Places of the Field; who assembled, and march'd, and were ready to have fought at the Waters of *Perth*, had not Heaven fought for them, and trodden down their Strength; those Governors who came down, as those out of *Ephraim*, against *Amalek*, and *Benjamin*, and *Machir*, and pursued our flying Foes over the Mountains, and through the Fastnesses, and ferreted them out of their Dens and Caves, and caused the Horse-Hoofs to be broken, by the Means of their Prancings, the Prancings of their Mighty ones, in running away precipitately. For though we may not, under the gracious Dispensation of the Gospel, curse our Enemies, that came not forth

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forth to the Help of the Lord, the lukewarm and indifferent Spectators of our Danger and Trouble, as *Deborah* did *Mer- roz*, bitterly; yet sure we may without Reproach, without being accused of insulting and domineering over our vanquished Adversaries, praise the Lord for his Goodness, and bless the Hands that have done such mighty Things for us, whereof we Rejoice this Day. But yet, let us not sacrifice unto our own Net, and burn Incense unto our own Drag, in the Phrase of the Prophet, *Habakkuk* 1. 16. ascribe unto our own Wisdom, and Strength, and Power, the Honour and Glory of our Success; but to Him to whom only it is due, to the Lord, whose Right-Hand, and whose stretched-out Arm hath gotten us this Victory. And since he hath given this great Deliverance to our King, thus shewn his Mercy to his Anointed, and to his Posterity, let us give Thanks unto the Lord, and sing Praises unto his Name:

To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen.

F I N I S.

